

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed September 27, 2004 has been reviewed and carefully considered. The Examiner's allowance of claims 1-6, 9 and 10 is appreciated. Claims 1-6 and 9-16 remain pending in this application, of which the independent claims are 1 and 11. Reconsideration of the above-identified application, in view of the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

Claims 11-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,073,010 to Dufour in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,544,253 to Chow et al. ("Chow").

Claim 11 recites: . . . wherein . . . a home zone is defined by a fixed network in which the MS is further registered for use, the method comprising the steps of: (a) causing said MS to connect . . .

Item 2 of the Office Action, although acknowledging that Dufour fails to disclose or suggest "a home zone is defined by a fixed network in which the MS is further registered for use," suggests that it would have been obvious, based on Chow, to modify Dufour to realize this feature.

The Dufour fixed subscription area (FSA) is defined "as one or more regions of cells within which fixed subscribers are allowed to roam and receive and place calls." (col. 1, lines 59-61). "Fixed subscribers" are subscribers "with geographically limited access rights . . . and are generally equipped with either a fixed cellular terminal or a mobile station." (col. 1, lines 34-36). As Dufour explains, "operators may now offer subscribers a choice of subscription areas such as having cellular service only in a

downtown area, or for a higher cost, having service which includes both the downtown area and the suburbs as well” (col. 1, lines 30-33). Dufour relates to dropping an ongoing phone call when it wanders outside of the FSA (col. 3, lines 38-42), to prevent “co-channel and adjacent channel interference.” Another Dufour goal is to prevent system operators from losing money when a subscriber initiates a call in the FSA, thereby enjoying a lower fee, and wanders outside the FSA during the call, that call continuing uninterrupted and at the same fee even outside the FSA (col. 1, lines 51-54).

Chow mentions that its home zone may be approximately the same size as the subscriber’s fixed-network home zone, to allow the subscriber to give up the landline (col. 1, lines 59-65). However, a Chow subscriber is not stuck with the prospect of losing an ongoing phone call, as long as the Chow subscriber is located within either the home zone or any subscribed-to visiting zone (col. 2, lines 46-61). The Chow subscriber can therefore select a comfortable distance at which an ongoing call is to be dropped, independent of any fixed-network parameters.

The Dufour FSA probably already geographically covers, and extends well past, the subscriber’s fixed-network home zone. It is accordingly unclear what motivation exists to trim the Dufour FSA down to the boundaries of the fixed-network home zone.

Since the Dufour FSA has presumably been tailored by the subscriber to extend far enough so that the subscriber is comfortable with the prospect of a dropped call if the boundary is exceeded, it is unclear how Chow motivates the Dufour subscriber to cut back the FSA boundaries to match to those of the fixed-network home zone.

Perhaps the Office Action is suggesting that Chow visiting neighborhood zones

(VNZs) be introduced into Dufour, after downsizing the FSA to the borders of the fixed home zone, to allow the ongoing call to continue. This seems like an awkward modification of Dufour. It is hard to imagine what would have motivated limiting the Dufour FSA to a fixed-network home zone, since the Dufour FSA represents the geographical extent within which a mobile subscriber wishes to retain continuing an ongoing call. It is unclear what motivation exists, in view of Chow, to cut back the Dufour FSA to the boundaries of the subscriber's fixed network home zone.

In addition, although the cited references disclose that part of the database is changed according to a user's requirement, by adding by what is presumed to correspond to a home-zone list of the mobile station to the HLR, and subscriber's information for the home zone service is simply added, the present invention as recited in claim 11 includes the step of "causing said BSC to selectively perform the hand-off requested by said MS according to the home zone list and the subscriber service class information."

For at least all of the above reasons, Dufour and Chow fail to render obvious the present invention as recited in claim 11.

Claims 12-16 depend from base claim 11, and are deemed to be patentable over the two references for at least the same reasons.

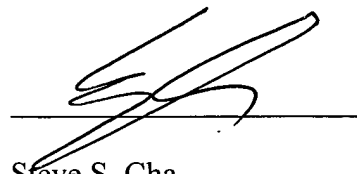
Early and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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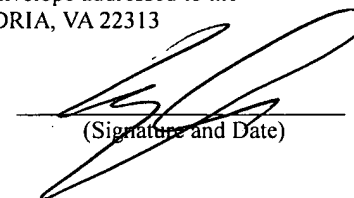
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